

KNUT KLAßEN AND HIS GELATIN

by Sandra Dempster

The Gelatin guys told me I could write whatever I wanted, so long as it got people through their door. It's not every day you're given full artistic licence, so I caution you - don't believe everything you read. But then again, when I quote Florian as saying, "It's better to stay at home - don't go," well, if you believe that then you'll miss out on one of the wildest rides/pieces of art-installation performance to blast through Berlin during the Festwochen. Gelatin: four infamous art guys - Florian, Ari, Wolfgang, Tobias - who make freaky site specific installations in locations all over the world, and then perform in them. Here, they're collaborating with Berliner Knut Klaußen, and the motto is "Don't ask what we can do for you, ask what you can do for us." They're looking for giving, well-trained, passive-submissive audience members who like being strapped into wheeled devices and thereafter handing over all control. Ari's wearing a pair of handcuffs, and says he wants to have fat men with hairy bellies, so...

Lock your children away, bring your own snacks and drugs, polish your nipple piercings, and wear comfortable clothing. Or uncomfortable clothing, depending on your thing. Bring raw fish and double chocolate to feed to the performers. And Gelatin also request that you bring jars of your own smegma to donate to their next project. Second caution: maybe accessorising with a natty little gasmask is a good idea, because Ari is muttering something about his serious stinking armpit smell dimensions which spread to a radius of up to one metre. Impressive.

It could be dangerous: in South Korea their rocket-ship fell over after they clambered into it, and the piece of chewing gum they stuck onto one of the New York Twin Towers got vaporised on 09-11-02 (and they say chewing gum lasts forever), so this is your third caution - you should be prepared. But be Zen: "No expectations," says Ari. "Not too much," says Tobias.

And I can't tell you much more - the Pallasseum apartment they've rented for the project was still under construction when I interviewed them - a blacked-out room, carpet strips and ramps, Wolfgang wiring up a light bulb, drills, cheese rinds, gaffa tape, empty cigarette packets, and lists of required materials is all I've seen. Just so long as they repaint the walls and floors after they pack out I'm sure the landlord will be happy. But while they're there, what will



the neighbours say about the screams and the lines of people queuing to be...mmm...what?

The running title is "Die Schlotze", inspired, Ari says, by a visit to a sex bar, and Tobias says it's something like a Geisterbahn (Ghost Train), but not the family entertainment variety. My guess is it lies somewhere in between the Erotic Messe and Deutsche Bahn (see first caution above). Depending on logistics, Gelatin hope to get through between 30 - 50 punters per evening, so, "Roll up! Roll up!" early for your ticket on the most curious, scintillating, direct-impact, no limitations, sense-expanding ride of your life, or at least in the Northern Hemisphere this autumn.

*Gelatin, Wed 9th - Sat 12th October, 18 - 21 hrs, in the Pallasseum, Pallasstrasse 6a, Entry 1 euro, Information 254 89-100, www.festwochen.de